

REMARKS

The undersigned wishes to thank Examiners Black and Pedder for the courtesy extended during the personal interview conducted on March 4, 2009. A separate record of the substance of the interview is included in the remarks that follow.

Claims 13-19 and 22-32 remain in this application. Reconsideration of the application is requested.

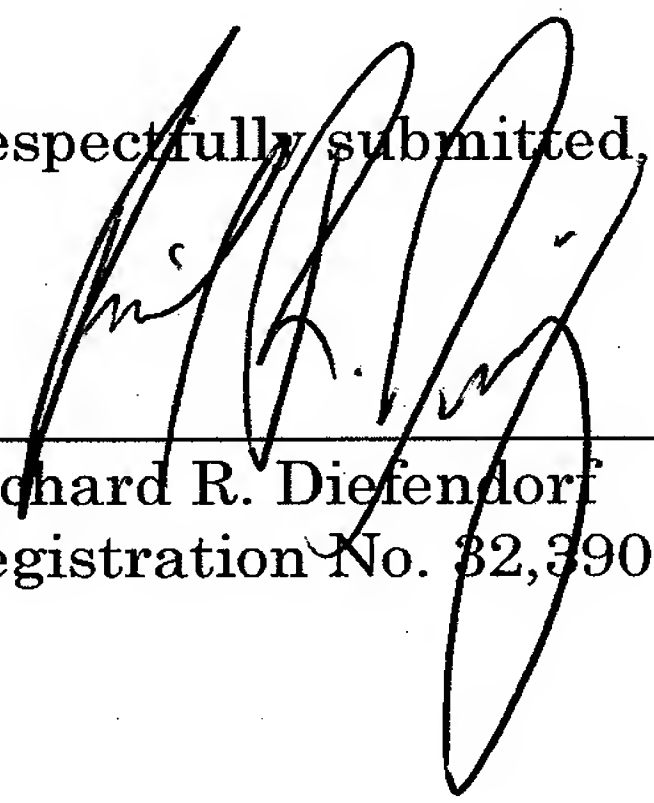
Independent claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), along with various dependent claims, as unpatentable over the Horiuchi et al. and Winter et al. patents relied on previously. Claim 13, however, is amended above in the manner discussed during the interview to specify, *inter alia*, that the pillar base extends exclusively in the lower vehicle body section recited previously in the claim. Claim 14 is also amended for consistency with claim 13. It was tentatively agreed during the interview that the limitations now present in claim 13 serve to distinguish the invention from the disclosures relied on. The additional secondary reference discussed in section 4 on page 4 of the Office Action does not suggest structural modifications meeting the limitations noted, moreover, and it is respectfully submitted that claim 13 above is patentable.

If there are any questions regarding this Reply or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an extension of time sufficient to effect a timely response. Please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (Docket #095309.57812US).

Respectfully submitted,

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